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SUBJECT: UNHCHR PROPOSES PURGING INTELLIGENCE FILES, MONITORING
MILITARY

REF: REF A: 08BOGOTA4305; REF B: 09BOGOTA0998; REF C: 09BOGOTA2836
REF D: 09BOGOTA3075; REF E: 09BOGOTA3185

CLASSIFIED BY: William R. Brownfield, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B),
(C), (D)

SUMMARY

11. (C) United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Chief of Mission Christian Salazar requested on October 8 that the Ambassador support two UNHCHR proposals: a multi-year purging of intelligence files and a two-year monitoring of the military's implementation of its human rights policies. Salazar estimated the annual cost for each project would be around \$400,000, and noted UNHCHR was seeking multi-lateral financial support. Still, he emphasized the importance of USG political and financial assistance to assure GOC buy-in. The Ambassador expressed support for the two projects and requested proposals from UNHCHR to evaluate funding opportunities. End Summary

UNHCHR OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PURGING INTELLIGENCE FILES

12. (SBU) In a private lunch in the Ambassador's office on October 8, UNHCHR Chief of Mission Christian Salazar described his office's progress in achieving its decade-long recommendation to purge Colombian intelligence files of politically-motivated intelligence on human rights defenders (REFS A, D). Salazar said a combination of events had opened the door for an intelligence purge, including the scandal surrounding the Administrative Department of Security's (DAS) illegal surveillance (REF E) and the September 23 signing of Decree 3600--which outlined the application of the new intelligence law and called for an evaluation of intelligence files. Salazar has received positive signals from government officials regarding UNHCHR participation in a purge of DAS, Colombian National Police (CNP), and military intelligence files.

13. (C) Salazar outlined UNHCHR's proposal to begin with a pilot project to purge DAS files of information on United Nations officials. The pilot project's technical mechanism would then be implemented in a broader, multi-agency intelligence review--a review that Salazar opined would take five to seven years. Salazar suggested a potential sticking point for the GOC would be the inclusion of the Inspector General's office (Procuraduria)--an agency, according to Salazar, that lacks both competency and the GOC's confidence. Still, Salazar said UNHCHR would insist that the Inspector General--the formal state control agency--be involved in order to build that agency's capacity.

14. (C) The Ambassador outlined the USG's efforts to confront the GOC over the recent wiretapping scandals and said he had told the highest levels of government the USG expects to see transparent and thorough investigations. Ambassador Brownfield accepted Salazar's tactical approach to focus solely on UN personnel, noting that while it initially might appear self-serving for the UN, such an approach would be the least likely to create a polarizing political debate. He underscored the necessity of identifying appropriate personnel and suggested seeking assistance from the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).

MONITORING THE MILITARY'S APPLICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES

15. (C) Salazar outlined a separate UNHCHR proposal to monitor the military's application of its human rights policies, called the "15 measures" (REF B). Salazar acknowledged improvements in human rights by the military, particularly the significant decline in extrajudicial killings since the GOC publicly dismissed 27 members of the military in October 2008. Still, he expressed concern that counter-reform elements in the military would prevent the institutionalization of the 15 measures. For that reason, he said, the UNHCHR has proposed this two-year project. Salazar emphasized the monitoring group's findings--with the exception of human rights violations--would be shared only with the Ministry. He reported both Defense Minister Gabriel Silva Lujan and Vice Minister Sergio Jaramillo have expressed support for the project. Salazar suggested the informal multi-lateral consultation mechanism between the MOD, several governments, and international organizations could be revitalized as part of the monitoring project (REF C).

USG FUNDING REQUESTED

16. (C) While the projects must be multi-lateral to be credible, Salazar emphasized they could not succeed without USG political and financial support. He requested "synchronized messaging" on the importance of the projects to ensure GOC buy-in. He estimated the total annual cost of each project would be approximately \$400,000. The Ambassador expressed support in principle for both concepts and promised to consider available funding options once he received a written proposal.

BROWNFIELD